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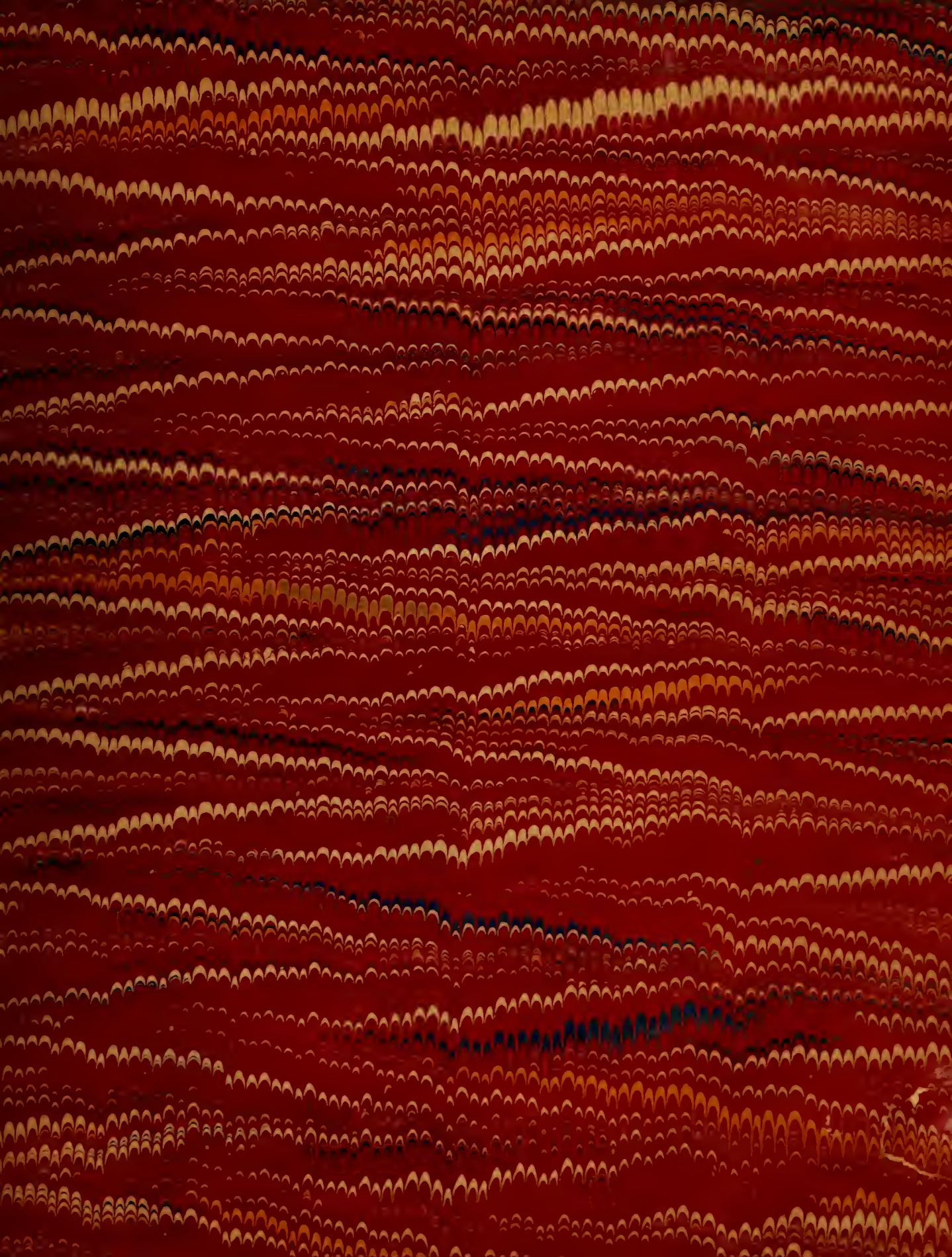
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



*J. C. G. Kennedy Esq^r
from the author.*

J O S E P H H U M E.

A Memorial:

BY

JOSEPH BURNLEY HUME.

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace!"
PSALM xxxvii. 37.

LONDON:
JOHN W. PARKER AND SON, WEST STRAND.

1855.

[Price One Penny.]

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JOSEPH HUME

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JOSEPH HUME,

BORN THE 22ND OF JANUARY, 1777;

DIED THE 20TH OF FEBRUARY, 1855;

IN THE SEVENTY-NINTH YEAR OF HIS AGE.

ATTEST
JOSEPH HUME
JANUARY 22 1777
FEBRUARY 20 1855

IT may be twelve months since a change came o'er him, vague and dim;
The heart with age fell worn and weak; it stinted trunk and limb.

Or ere the frame began to bow, or the firm hand to shake,
He waned and wasted ashy pale; whilst haply in him spake

A feeling, like an inner voice, that whispered of elsewhere:
For somewhat gentlier wrought the brain beneath his blanching hair.

But in the autumn, in Caithness, befel him on a day
A sickness, that he knew was sent to summon him away;

And he grew still and mused at times; or turned a thoughtful eye
On this or that, to order all his house ere he should die:

And, when the leaves were falling fast, he told a friend of yore:
"I'm going down to Norfolk now,—and shall return no more."

He went: and, when hard winter raged and frosts on frosts were shed,
From feeble he grew feebler, till he could not leave his bed;

And in a while he called us all, and said: "'Tis come at last;
The hand of death is on me now; the bourn will soon be past.

“ Yet, thank God! neither ache nor pain have I, nor aught of ill;
 ’Tis but the wheelwork wearing out:—anon it must be still.

“ I could indeed have wished to see some few things more set right;
 But it is well: to mutual love I leave ye all: good night!”

And from that hour a slumber gathered o’er him, and prevailed,
 And deepened with eve’s darkening shades, nor e’en at noontide failed;

And ’neath its numb wand, spell by spell, with declination slow
 His breathing slackened, and his pulse sank lower and more low,

Until they flickered, as the sparks in some expiring wick,
 That now seem lost amid the gloom, and yet again are quick.

Three long clear nights heaven’s myriad eyes above that deep trance shone;
 Three long bright days the glorious beams o’er dazzling snows streamed on;

But when the third slow-setting sun its last sweet smile had shot,
 We listened for another gasp, though faint—but he was not:

Of this world not: and yet so soft a touch had loosed the ties
 Of soul and clay, that not in death had he unclosed his eyes!

So then we kissed him, one by one, and slowly turned away;
 We thought of what he had been spared: we could not choose but pray:

And praying so lay down to rest:—but I, I could not sleep,
 And rose anon, beside his corse a morning watch to keep.

When, lo! from his marked lineaments there beamed, as ne'er before
In my sight, an expression, fraught with vivid light and lore,

That breathed a sense of lofty joy, a sort of smile superb,
A calm yet half-triumphant mood, that seemed full hard to curb;

As though he had unveiled the truth, which zealots so disguise,
And solved the world-old problem, and found all to his surmise!

Since then throughout the land have sped the tidings of his death;
And many have breathed benisons; though some have spared their breath;

And, when we laid him here, grown men and old men too shed tears:
Methinks there were but few did not, despite our sex and years.

Yet none, perchance, my father knew, as I would have him known;
For he, if ever any, had a being all his own!

To me, in this late age, he seemed a birth of younger time;
A creature, such as might have walked the earth when in its prime.

His body was a master-piece; for force, endurance, speed,
And every kind of action perfect; beautiful indeed:

Of temper such, that ne'er perhaps with less repose or food
Did any nourish or sustain a frame of flesh and blood:

And so robust, that seven and seventy years left unimpaired
A vigour, his abstemious ways had ne'er abused nor spared.

And unto this was knit a soul of nature's simplest mould,
Strong, calm, brave, tender, manly, like some patriarch of old,

And so sincere, that, what e'en foes would promise, he believed;
And did so ever and again, how oft so'er deceived.

To see good was to follow it in his instinctive creed;
For him to do what he felt right no effort seemed to need;

Nor, even when 'twas done, cared he or thought reward to claim:
His virtue was its own reward! he sought nor power nor fame,

A more unselfish course than his did seldom Heaven inspire;
And in that course he persevered with courage nought could tire.

No labour seemed to weary him; no conflict to appal;
Unquailing, aye e'en sanguine, 'mid the worst that could befall;

And evermore unruffled: strife embittered not his mind;
Defeat and scorn could never leave one rankling pang behind.

Full often, ere the echo of the jeer had ceased to creep
About St. Stephen's, unto him 'twas nought—he was asleep!

And often, ere the hour, that marred some grand aim, passed away,
You might have seen him on his knees, among his babes, at play!

Nor e'er, I deem, to mortal man was given to enjoy
More perfect health of body and soul, a bliss without alloy.

In him too, muse, the poet dwelt; in all that stirs the heart,
All Nature's charms, all good men's deeds and duties, he felt part;

And in all creatures' welfare took delight profound and strong:
Yea, 'twas a festival to him to see a joyous throng!

Nor was he slow to sympathise with misery and grief;
But, in the striving to amend all this, he found relief.

Benevolent himself, in quenchless hope the earth he trod:
His being one continued act of thanksgiving to God!

And thus a long charmed life he lived, that scarce knew check or fall;
Successful as but few can be, and happy beyond all!

Nay now meseems, his cold clay's silent smile was but a seal
By angels set to affirm our faith in his eternal weal!

Nor will I doubt that e'en on earth by many a grateful tongue
At fitting times and seasons shall his meed of praise be sung:

For to his simple soul was given a sturdy common sense,
That seized, what finer talents missed, with striking prescience.

To him, by intuition, came high thoughts and bold and new;
And all unawed by custom he embraced the right and true;

And from afar, alone, despite a gibing, roaring throng,
He urged reforms, and claimed redress of many a freeman's wrong:

Although not his the skill to ensure or work these out, alone:
And others gat more thanks than he for crops that he had sown.

For one art did he mainly want—the art men's minds to reach;
And in a wordy age he stood a Moses, “slow of speech,”

That lacked his Aaron, lacked discourse and dialectic thought
To range and serry arguments to crown the truth he taught:

Till not all those e'en, who admired his probity, discerned
That from his unschooled utterance much wisdom might be learned.

Yet, when men heed how many steps of import the most grave,
Which years since he advised, alone, let who would sneer or rave,

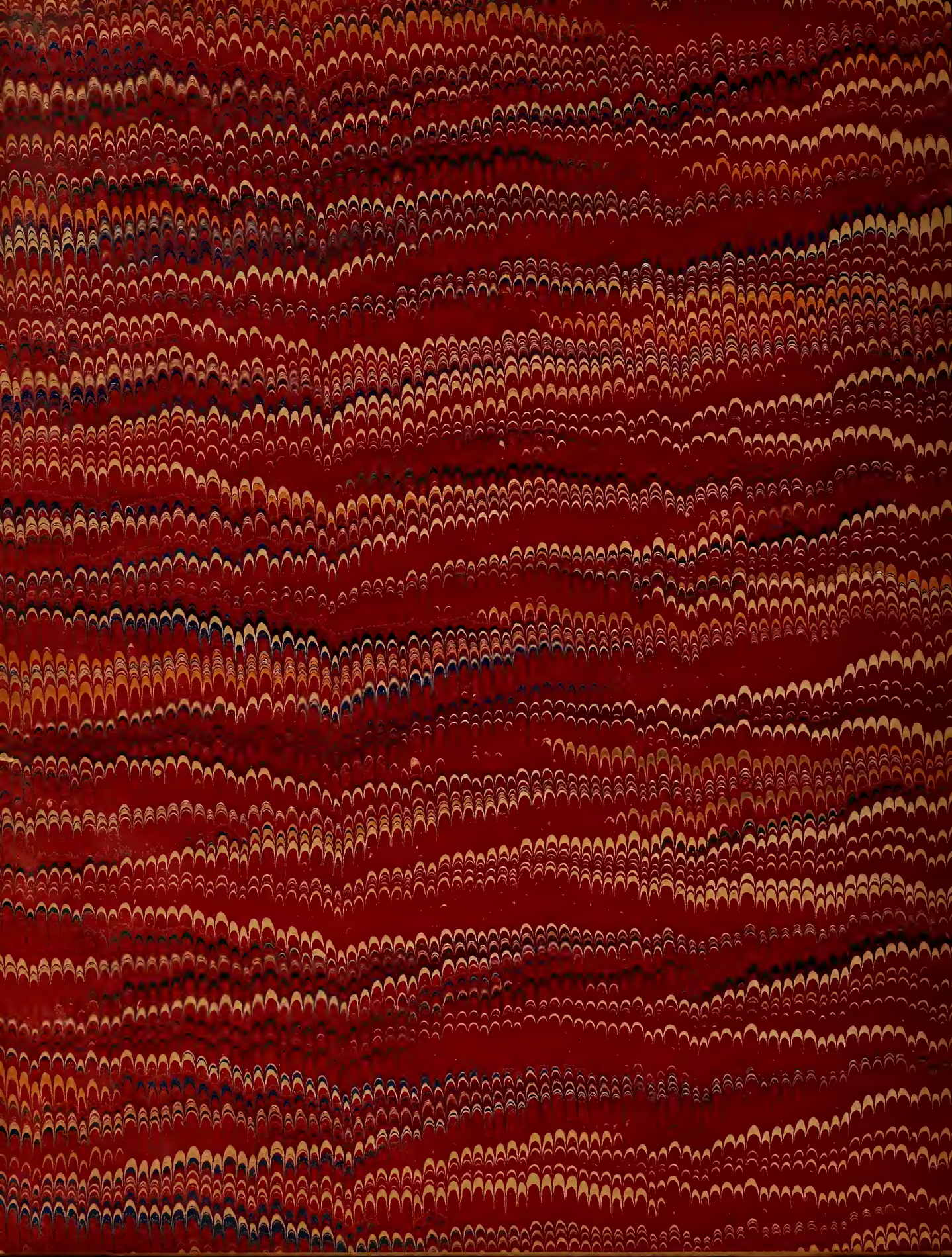
Have been adopted, and have proved his counsel wise and just,
They cannot but revere him; who is here laid, “dust to dust.”

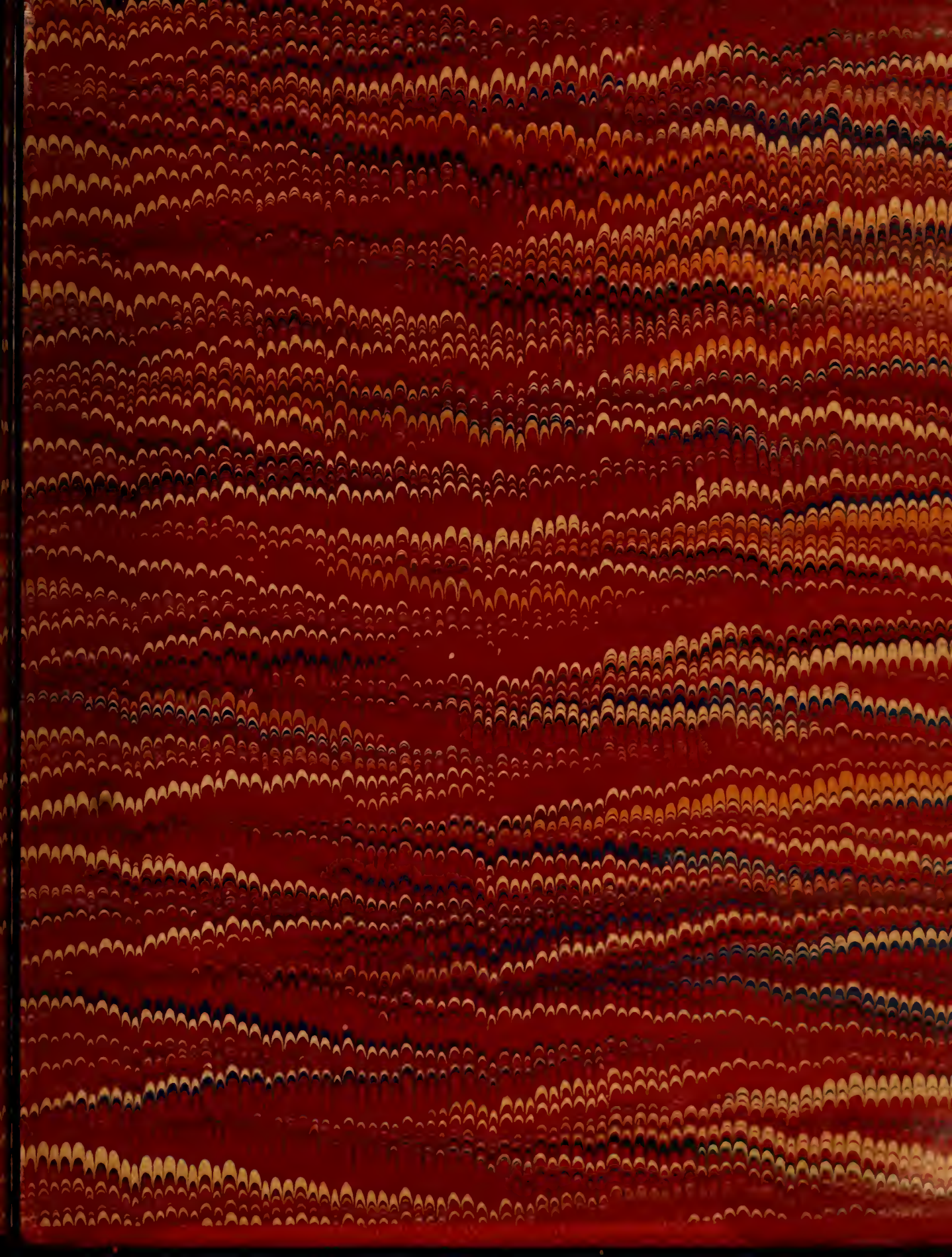
Nor will that reverence dwindle; nay, e'en now, beside his tomb,
On tongues unborn, methinks, I hear a great name—JOSEPH HUME!

KENSAL GREEN CEMETERY,

Sunday, March 4th, 1855.







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